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SIPDIS
TELEGRAM

June 09, 2003

To: No Action Addressee
Action: Unknown
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 2734 - ROUTINE)
TAGS: OIIP, KPAO
Captions: None
Subject: MEPI: UAE MEDIA TRAINING WORKSHOP ON NEWS, FEATURES,
AND ANALYTICAL WRITING
Ref: None

UNCLAS ABU DHABI 02734

SIPDIS
CXABU:
ACTION: AMB
INFO: PAO POL DCM ECON
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INFO: PAO

DISSEMINATION: AMB
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: ADCM:TWILLIAMS
DRAFTED: PAO:TPONCE
Cleared: PAO:KVANDEVATE

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RR RUEHC RUEHXK
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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 090504Z JUN 03
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0312
INFO RUEHXK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE

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SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/PPD (WMOONEY, JDAVIES, DMACINNES,
ACASPER); NEA/PI (CBOURGEOIS); NEA/RA; NEA/ARP
(LMALENAS, DJONES); NEA/FO; PA; IIP/T/GIC (JBOCHNER,
WPETERS)

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: OIIP KPAO TC
SUBJECT: MEPI: UAE MEDIA TRAINING WORKSHOP ON NEWS,
FEATURES, AND ANALYTICAL WRITING

¶1. SUMMARY: UNDER THE MEPI GOAL OF PROMOTING A MORE PROFESSIONAL AND INDEPENDENT MEDIA, VETERAN JOURNALIST PAUL MILLER CONDUCTED TWO, WEEK-LONG "NEWS, FEATURES AND ANALYTICAL WRITING" WORKSHOPS FOR THE STAFF OF THE EMIRATES NEW AGENCY. MR. MILLER COMPARED WESTERN AND ARAB MEDIA SOURCES AND FOCUSED ON IMPROVING BASIC AND INTERMEDIATE MEDIA SKILLS, SUCH AS DEVELOPING ANALYTICAL SKILLS AND USING MULTIPLE SOURCES AND PERSPECTIVES. AS PAS ABU DHABI WORKS HARD TO PLACE USG POLICIES IN THE UAE PRESS, THIS MEPI WORKSHOP OPENED MINDS AND DOORS IN

THE UAE GOVERNMENT'S OFFICIAL WIRE SERVICE AND BEYOND. THE RESULTS AUGUR WELL FOR THE SUCCESS OF FUTURE MEDIA TRAINING IN THE UAE. END SUMMARY.

¶12. FURTHER TO POST'S PROPOSAL TO IBRAHIM AL ABED, HEAD OF THE EMIRATES NEWS AGENCY (WAM) AND CLOSE ADVISOR TO MINISTER OF INFORMATION SHEIKH ABDULLAH BIN ZAYED AL NAHYAN, PAS ABU DHABI ORGANIZED A MEDIA TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR WAM JOURNALISTS AND EDITORS. MR. AL ABED DESCRIBED WAM'S PRIMARY GOAL FOR THE WORSHOP AS TRAINING THEIR UAE NATIONAL JOURNALISTS AND EDITORS, WHO OFTEN LACK THE SKILLS OF THEIR ARAB EXPATRIATE COUNTERPARTS. HE ENCOURAGED MR. MILLER TO EXPRESS HIMSELF FREELY, TO COMPARE WESTERN AND ARAB MEDIA METHODS, AND TO WORK ON DEVELOPING THE ANALYTICAL AND PRACTICAL SKILLS NECESSARY TO CRAFT A PROFESSIONAL WIRE SERVICE STORY.

¶13. FROM MAY 17 TO 28, VETERAN US JOURNALIST PAUL MILLER CONDUCTED TWO WEEK-LONG MEDIA TRAINING SESSIONS FOR THE WAM ABU DHABI AND DUBAI STAFFS. APPROXIMATELY FORTY JUNIOR AND MID-LEVEL UAE NATIONAL AND ARAB EXPATRIATE JOURNALISTS PARTICIPATED. MR. MILLER DESCRIBED THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HARD NEWS REPORTING, OPINION WRITING, AND FEATURE ANALYSIS, BUT GAVE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO PROMOTING ANALYTICAL AND CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN DEVELOPING NEWS STORIES. DURING THE TRAINING, MR. MILLER REGULARLY URGED THE JOURNALISTS AND EDITORS PRESENT TO DRAW UPON BOTH ARAB AND WESTERN MEDIA TO PRODUCE OBJECTIVE, FACTUAL REPORTS. DAILY TOPICS INCLUDED "HOW TO WRITE A HARD NEWS STORY", "HOW TO WRITE A NEWS LEAD," AND "ELIMINATING BIAS IN REPORTING."

¶14. RESULT/IMPACT: OUTSTANDING. MR. AL-ABED AND WAM PARTICIPANTS PRAISED THE WORKSHOP AND PLEDGED TO IMPLEMENT MR. MILLER'S TRAINING IMMEDIATELY. WHILE THE IMPACT OF THIS WORKSHOP ON WAM WILL BE JUDGED OVER TIME, ITS BENEFIT AS A PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE IS ALREADY SPREADING TO THE UAE'S OTHER MEDIA OUTLETS. AT THEIR REQUEST, PAS ABU DHABI INTRODUCED MR. MILLER TO THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT OF ABU DHABI TV, DUBAI TV (DTV), AND AL-ARABIYAH SATELLITE TV. ALL WERE IMPRESSED, MOST NOTABLY DTV ADMINISTRATORS, WHO PROGRAMMED MR. MILLER ON-THE-SPOT FOR A WEEKEND WORKSHOP WITH NEWS AND BUSINESS EDITORS. MILLER IS ALREADY SCHEDULED TO RETURN TO DUBAI LATER THIS MONTH TO ADVISE ON OVERHAULING THEIR ENTIRE OPERATION AND TO PROVIDE FURTHER TRAINING. COUPLED WITH OTHER TRAINING REQUESTS FROM ABU DHABI TV AND AL-ARABIYAH, THE IMPACT OF THIS WORKSHOP WILL BE FAR-REACHING.

WAHBA